

The Rocky Hill Town Council held its regular meeting on Monday, May 19, 2014 in the Council Chambers of Town Hall. Mayor Henry Vasel called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Those in attendance: Deputy Mayor Nadine Bell, Councilor Meg Casasanta, Councilor Guy Drapeau, Councilor Joe Kochanek, Councilor Bill MacDonald, Councilor Tim Moriarty, Councilor Frank Szeps and Councilor Cathy Vargas. Also present: Town Manager Barbara Gilbert and Finance Director John Mehr.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Mayor Vasel asked for a Moment of Silence.

Mayor Vasel said that they had two items to take care of before they got to "Public Comment" this evening. He said that State Representative Tony Guerrero had a few words to say. State Representative Guerrero said good evening and he said that he wanted to give a quick overview as to what had happened during the last session (legislative). He apologized because he said that he had told Mayor Vasel and Town Manager Gilbert that he had to get to another meeting this evening for 7:15 p.m. State Representative Guerrero said they were able to get an additional \$280,000 compared to what the Town had received last year (i.e. for PILOT money or ECS, etc.). He said that they were happy to fight with regards to getting this.

State Representative Guerrero then mentioned how he had been approached by the Town with regards to him trying to put some language in for the school bonding (for the Rocky Hill High School Renovate as New project) with regards to the waiver and he said how that had been a very difficult task. This was able to be done within ten hours before the session had ended. This was passed in the House and the Senate. This is just awaiting the signature of the Governor. He told them that they can rest assured that they hopefully won't have to go back out to referendum for the additional money. He said this is very good news on behalf of all of the legislators and he told the Town Council that he is sure that this is very good news too on behalf of all of them. Deputy Mayor Bell thanked State Representative Guerrero.

State Representative Guerrero then said that he agrees about the Town having Tulisano Park. He then mentioned again about how he has to be at another meeting if they had no questions. He told them if they want more of an overview with regards to the legislative session that he has no problem coming back again in front of all of them with regards to what has occurred.

Mayor Vasel thanked State Representative Guerrero for his hard work and he said they appreciate it.

Mayor Vasel then said that he wanted to call the essay contest winners from the various schools up to the front of the Council Chambers. He said that these winners wanted to read pieces of their essays aloud to everyone.

Superintendent Dr. Mark Zito told the Town Council that they appreciated being present this evening. The Board of Education had honored a number of Rocky Hill students at their meeting last week. These students had done an outstanding job in the essay contest. He told the Town Council that they knew how a number of Elected Officials had gone into the schools several weeks ago to meet with the children and to talk about the various roles in local government (i.e. for the Mayor, the Councilors and the members of the Board of Education). He said what had impressed him was the realization that some of the children already had some understanding of what local government does and many of them watch the meetings at night in order to see what is going on in their Town. He said that they are really pleased.

Superintendent Dr. Zito introduced Darlene Brown, who is the Language Arts Coordinator, and he said that she will soon be moving into the role of the Interim Assistant Superintendent.

Superintendent Dr. Zito said that Darlene Brown had helped to organize the contest.

Superintendent Dr. Zito introduced the students first: Nathaniel Place (West Hill School- Grade Three), Emma Simons (Stevens School – Grade Three), Ashley Stevens (West Hill School – Grade Four), Emma Wilkinson (Stevens School – Grade Four), Ian Duffy (Stevens School – Grade Five), Hannah Fuller (West Hill School – Grade Five) and Alexandra Pikorsk (Griswold Middle School – Grade Five).

Mayor Vasel asked Superintendent Dr. Zito if it was okay with him for the students to read their essays aloud from the Mayor's seat. Superintendent Dr. Zito said that would be fine. Darlene Brown helped to line these students up at this point. Superintendent Dr. Zito told the Town Council that he knew they had a busy agenda this evening so he said that each of these students would be reading the most important sentence, or two, that really captures the essence of their essays that they wrote.

At this point, each of the students took turns reading a sentence, or two, aloud from their essays. Mayor Vasel asked for a round of applause for all of these students after they were all finished. He told them they did a good job and then he had a picture taken with them. Superintendent Dr. Zito and the Councilors told the students they did a great job.

Public Comment

Mayor Vasel asked if there was anyone from the public who wished to speak at this time. Chief Mike Garrahy, (resident of 180 Pheasant Drive, R.H. and Fire Chief of RHFD, 3050 Main Street, R.H.), thanked the Town Council for allowing him to speak this evening. He said that he wanted to take a little time to address the budget of the RHFD. He told Mayor Vasel that this might take a little longer than two minutes and he apologized if it did. Mayor Vasel told Chief Garrahy to please continue. Chief Garrahy said thank you. He told the Town Council that they are in a real difficult position and he said that everyone understands, as well as appreciates, that they are trying to reduce spending and that they are trying to create a budget that is fair. He told them that he wouldn't want to be sitting in their chairs and he said this isn't an easy task.

Chief Garrahy said the RHFD's budget begins with a needs' assessment. This is just what they will need to do for their job for the next year and to also meet their goals. They had received direction from Town Manager Gilbert this year to come in lower than they had been for the last

budget cycle. Chief Garrahy said the RHFD met this request. He said that he wanted to be clear that he and his Staff weren't consulted about the ramifications of any budget cuts.

Chief Garrahy said that he wanted to address several of the budget cuts that are on the RHFD's supervision page. He referred to the \$1,500 cut from the uniform account. A typical Honor Guard uniform costs approximately \$800 and a typical firefighter's uniform costs approximately \$600. He mentioned how Councilor Kochanek, who is a former Fire Chief, had eloquently stated last week that the wearing of the uniform is a source of pride for the members, just like them answering the call is. Chief Garrahy told the Town Council that they have to remember that the Town uses the members of the RHFD at ceremonial events and he told them that they will see them "standing tall and proud" at the Memorial Day Parade next Monday. The members will be representing the RHFD and the Town.

Chief Garrahy referred to the dues and subscriptions account and he said this was finally getting back to where it had been after several years of it being reduced because of budget concerns. Their membership to the Connecticut Fire Chiefs Association was one of the memberships that they hadn't been able to support in the past. This Association had been awarded a federal grant for recruitment and retention a few years back. The RHFD wasn't a member at that time though so they weren't able to benefit from the grant. He said that the RHFD needs to be a part of that organization, as well as organizations like that, so that they can stay in touch on a federal level and on a State level.

Chief Garrahy referred to training. He mentioned how the Town had embarked on a mission to create a Police training facility on West Street several years ago and he said that he had stood at this podium. He had said that training is the key to safe, effective and efficient public safety. He wanted to reaffirm that statement this evening. The \$10,000 that was cut from their training budget was for continuing education for the members of the RHFD and the remainder was targeted for recruit training. The RHFD is forced now to create a balance between education for the department and between recruit training. He has no doubt that some of the members will be going without training.

Chief Garrahy said the RHFD understands economic hardships and the effects that it has on a municipal budget. He said that he needed to express though that the RHFD is not economy driven and when the economy slows down, they don't. They need to constantly reinforce their knowledge of fire tactics and strategy, as well as the skills that are needed to implement them. They do this by training, which they do hard. They do this for their safety and also for the safety of the citizens. He mentioned that the cuts will affect their performance and their proficiency will suffer. He said that this is the bottom line.

Chief Garrahy said the RHFD members understand that their job has inherent dangers and they accept this. They rely on their training program though to help them recognize the dangers and to minimize them. He said that their training program works and he mentioned that this was evidenced by his report earlier to Town Manager Gilbert.

Chief Garrahy said that he had received a phone call last week from a Councilor and he was informed that the RHFD needed to do its part in the budget reduction. Chief Garrahy said the

RHFD does its part every day and they save this Town money every day too. This is every time that they answer the call and he mentioned some other ways that they save the Town money too. The RHFD saves this Town approximately \$5,500,000 per year in labor costs that there would be for a career fire department by them doing what they do and by the manner in which they do it. He referred to members of the RHFD who were in the back of Council Chambers now and he said they are of the highest caliber. Chief Garrahy said that he is proud of the members.

Chief Garrahy referred to communications. He mentioned how they had quite the discussion about communications and public safety earlier. He still feels that it is not the right way to go to have the RHFD's money transferred to the IT Department that doesn't have the Staff at this point to support the current workload. Experience has shown them that the way to manage computers and telecommunications is on the local level. This is where the local manager would have the same sense of importance and urgency as the end user because he is one. It is the responsibility of Assistant Chief Dave Kromas to maintain the RHFD's communications and IT. Chief Garrahy requested that the money stays where it is until the IT Department puts on a dedicated public safety person as had been recommended by the IT study. He said that Assistant Chief Kromas had mentioned that no one understands the needs of the RHFD better than they do.

Chief Garrahy said he wanted to also address the RHFD's storm standby account, which is used whenever the road conditions or the forecasted weather becomes too dangerous to have crews responding from their homes. This is when they are put in the firehouses. He said this doesn't always mean snow. He referred to a comment that Councilor Kochanek had made last week with regards to training and people sleeping at night. Chief Garrahy said he offers the storm standby account as one of the Town's peaceful sleep accounts. The members of the RHFD are away from their families and their homes when the citizens of Rocky Hill are at home during weather events in order to protect the citizens' homes and their families. He told the Town Council that this includes them. He mentioned that this account is about a timely response to emergencies and about safety. The need for firefighters to respond from their homes is eliminated when they are in the firehouses and they are able to get to fire calls in a very timely fashion with the cooperation of the Town's Highway Department in the winter time. He gave an example of how busy the RHFD can get during storms.

Chief Garrahy referred to uniforms again. He said that he had hit that earlier this evening. He told the Town Council that he heard everything they had said last week and he said their message was received.

Chief Garrahy thanked the Town Council for restoring half of the proposed cut in the activity accounts. He respectfully requested that they restore the remainder of this. He told the Town Council if they hadn't noticed that the RHFD had been pretty busy lately hanging the American flags along the Memorial Day Parade route and the Town Green. This had been done while most people were still sound asleep last weekend. The cost of doing this was breakfast out of the activity account for the members. He said activities exactly like this will be affected by the reducing of this account.

Chief Garrahy told the Town Council that he comes before them every year to discuss the importance of the RHFD retaining good members and it would be counterproductive for them to

cut an aspect of the retention program. It goes a long way to the RHFD retaining its members from this little bit of giveback. This is part of their incentive to belong to the RHFD. He said it was worth noting now that the neighboring fire departments provide their fire companies with approximately double the amount that the RHFD is requesting.

Chief Garrahy said that he had received quite a few phone calls from the Town residents and also from members of the RHFD after the Town Council meeting last week. These were messages of support for the RHFD. There also had been much discussion about the tone of the revisiting of the budget. He said that he was speaking from the heart. He wanted the Town Council to know that there was a genuine feeling of disappointment and betrayal in the fire stations.

Chief Garrahy said in conclusion that his reason for being present this evening was quite obvious. This was for him to respectfully request to the Town Council that they reinstate the budget cuts to the RHFD. He wanted everyone to know though that regardless of what happens this evening that they can still count on the RHFD to answer the call. The call will be answered by performance to the highest standards possible because that is who the members of the RHFD are. This is the level of commitment, loyalty and dedication that they have had since 1927. He thanked the Town Council for their time and he said that he appreciated this. He thanked the members of the RHFD who were present this evening for being there to support this. Mayor Vasel said thank you.

Mayor Vasel asked if anyone else from the public wished to speak. Rich Pawlich-Pagliccio, 11 Washington Street, R.H., said his father had been an active member and a Charter Member of the RHFD. He said that he had known Mayor Vasel's father very well and he was a dedicated member of the Wethersfield Fire Department. Rich Pawlich-Pagliccio said he is a retired Deputy Chief of the RHFD and he had been in charge of apparatus maintenance and training, as well as communications. He is a member of the New England Fire Chiefs Association and the Connecticut Fire Chiefs Association presently. He said that he pays for those memberships out of his own pocket. He is also a past member of the Rocky Hill Town Council and he was the past Chairman of the Public Safety Committee, as well as past Chairman of the Parks and Rec Advisory Board. He also is a former employee of the RHPD where he was a public safety dispatcher. He has been attending the Rocky Hill Town Council meetings for over forty years and he was a little surprised at some of the behavior of some of the Councilors last Monday evening. He told them that they are all volunteers and it doesn't take too much to use a little compassion and common sense for each other. Comments he had received from the public weren't complimentary exactly. He told them whether they are on the Town Council or the RHFD, etc., they have to conduct themselves in a professional manner.

Rich Pawlich-Pagliccio told the Town Council at their level that it is not wise for them to decrease the RHFD's budget. He referred to an article that had been in the *Rare Reminder* last Thursday. This was with regards to State Representative Christine Carpino voting to fund the Middlesex Fire Training School. Rich Pawlich-Pagliccio referred to a quote of State Representative Carpino that he read aloud. He said there was also a quote in this article from Fire Chief Bobby Shay from Portland, CT and he is also the President of the Connecticut Fire Chiefs Association presently. Rich Pawlich-Pagliccio mentioned that "they have to respond to numerous emergencies but some of them never leave their hearts and minds". He said that he

just had a flashback of some of the incidents where he had been a Commander in the RHFD. He mentioned one incident where he couldn't save the life of someone who had jumped off of the bridge on I-91 by St. James Church. This was someone who he had delivered mail to for many years.

Rich Pawlich-Pagliccio said that it is especially difficult when they lose fellow members of their own fire department. They have also attended funerals of members of other fire departments, especially those who died in the line of duty.

Rich Pawlich-Pagliccio asked the Town Council to please restore the funding for the RHFD. He thanked the Town Council very much for also volunteering their time. Mayor Vasel said thank you.

Mayor Vasel asked if there was anyone else from the public who wished to speak. Christa Mariner, 58 Farms Village Road, R.H., said she didn't know how anyone could sit in Council Chambers, with the Memorial to 9/11 hanging there on the wall, and cut any funding to a volunteer fire department. She told them to restore every penny.

Christa Mariner asked Mayor Vasel if her mother could pass out copies of her correspondence to the Town Council at this time. Mayor Vasel said sure. Christa Mariner read her correspondence aloud and in full at this time. This was with regards to her commending Kim Ricci (Town Planner) for finding Section 151 of Public Act 13-247 and with regards to the Plan of Conservation and Development, as well as a motion for the restoration of the \$50,000 in funding that had been cut last week for this by the Republicans. She then gave some documents to Jessica Dumas (Clerk of the Council). Mayor Vasel said thank you.

Mayor Vasel asked if anyone else from the public wished to speak at this time. Charlie Wisnioski, 660 Old Main Street, R.H., said he wanted to make three points. He told the Town Council that he knew they had a lot to "digest" this evening so he said that he would be as quick as he could be. He referred to how State Representative Guerrera had come into this meeting a few minutes ago and how he had seemed to indicate that the Town would benefit by receiving an additional sum of money but he told the Town Council that he didn't know if this is included in their budget decision. Charlie Wisnioski then said for them to assume that this isn't included and he told the Town Council that he would like them to reconsider a few things.

Charlie Wisnioski told them that he would be giving them a neighborhood view. He lives on Old Main Street within approximately a block of the Town Hall building. He has a lot of daily contact with the fire station. He also said that he has a son who is in public service but he isn't a firefighter and he told the Town Council, as federal taxpayers, that they spend a lot of money training him. Training is done as an insurance policy so that someone is able to respond professionally with proper equipment and they are able to integrate what that individual does with all of the other public services when an unexpected and unwanted event arises. He said it is a false economy for them to think that they can do without insurance because they have insurance for everything. He mentioned that the RHFD is only as good as the individuals are and they will be going without insurance basically if they don't train the individuals to meet a standard. He sees the men and the women of the RHFD giving a little bit of their time every

Tuesday evening. He mentioned how those men and women occasionally get a little of this and a little of that but their spouses don't know if they are coming back home or in what condition (physically or mentally) they will be coming back. He also told them that as a Town that is along an interstate, the RHFD has an obligation to respond there. Many of the fire calls are for that. The insurance that property owners would pay years ago in a municipality was a function of the judgment of the fire department. Everyone would have to pay more for their insurance if the fire department had a poor rating because it was deemed that they were not as good as another community's was. He believes that someone who is on their Insurance Committee, etc. should investigate whether or not they would be doing a disservice to every taxpayer if their loss experience ratio may be impacted. He thinks that they need to support the RHFD. He told the Town Council that even if they couldn't do that this evening that there will be some reason for them to find some other aspect that is less important or it will be a reason for them to reinstate (money) if they discover that they are costing everybody more money in the future.

Charlie Wisnioski referred to the Cora J. Belden Library and he said that he had bought his house because it is near the library. He goes to the library every day, sometimes even three or four times a day. He considers himself to be rich for a lot of different reasons but he said a lot of the people who are using the library are immigrants who just got here. Those people can't afford to rent a video or to have a computer at home. The sole purpose of the people who work at the library is to help someone else. He is married to a schoolteacher and he is very aware of how much they have with regards to English as a second language. He thinks it makes Rocky Hill very rich to have people from most of the countries around the world. He told the Town Council that he thinks they have to consider who is going to be hurt by them reducing those services. He asked them again to find the money somewhere else.

Charlie Wisnioski said a massive study had been done in the State of Connecticut in 1987. This was called SCORP (State of Connecticut Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan). At that time, the State Department of Environmental Protection had done all kinds of surveys all across the State. High priority needs for recreation were determined. It was said that local government and State government should be seeking properties that were appropriate for open space, which includes parks under State Statutes. It was said that along the Connecticut River specifically that it is the most desirable recreational output among everyone that they could think of. He explained more about this. He then referred to their most recent Plan of Conservation and Development, which is old, and he said that this item would be coming up on their agenda later this evening. There is a section in this that talks about what is recommended and this is called "Focus On River Related Open Space". He read some of this section aloud. He mentioned that the establishing of a riverway trail along the Connecticut River in Rocky Hill through whatever ways are available is one of the things that could be done. This is all something that is being advocated with the Town. He mentioned about them acquiring Tulisano Park and related elements as part of a Town owned park. He told the Town Council that he was going to give them something that he had prepared with regards to Tulisano Park. He then told the Town Council that many of them who were sitting there had voted to acquire the land for a public park but it didn't go the way that everybody had wanted. Some of them then had subsequently voted to help the developer arrive at a plan which would include a public park. They would be obligated to help that developer to gain land use approvals. Subject to a great number of conditions, these land use approvals have been granted. They are moving forward and he said

that they would like to make Tulisano Park a public one. He thanked the Town Council very much. Mayor Vassel thanked Charlie Wisnioski. Charlie Wisnioski then handed over the information he had prepared with regards to Tulisano Park.

Mayor Vassel asked if there was anyone else who wished to speak at this time and he reminded everyone to please try to keep their comments to two minutes if possible. Jasmine Edmunds, 167 New Britain Avenue, R.H., said she was present this evening to speak for her little brother, who is in preschool at West Hill School. She said that her brother will be in kindergarten next year and she is hoping that he will be going to all-day kindergarten so that he will learn more and make more friends than he would if he goes to half-day kindergarten. She told the Town Council that she hopes they make all-day kindergarten possible and she thanked them. Mayor Vassel told Jasmine Edmunds that that was very well done and he thanked her.

Dion Sherman, 83 Terry Lane, R.H., said he wanted to petition the Town to have the basketball courts at Elm Ridge Park fixed. He has been living in Town for approximately eight years and these courts have been of very bad quality ever since he has been living here. He thinks it will really benefit Rocky Hill to have these repaired. He thanked the Town Council for their time. Mayor Vassel said thank you. He asked Town Manager Gilbert if this is something that they could look into and she said this is already noted. Mayor Vassel thanked Town Manager Gilbert.

Ed Garrahy, 69 Grimes Road, R.H., said he had retired from the Hartford Fire Department after twenty-seven years of service. He wanted them to know that there are very few things as important as training is for the people who they work with, etc. He said that on his way to this evening's meeting that he stopped to look at the Memorial that is in front of Engine 1 and that states it is for their fallen brothers. He lost a brother who was fighting fires in Rocky Hill many years ago. He told the Town Council that he hoped when they are doing the budget that the cutting of the training won't affect any of the present firefighters or that it won't affect any of the citizens of Rocky Hill. He said thank you. Mayor Vassel thanked Ed Garrahy.

Mayor Vassel asked if there was anyone else from the public who wished to speak. Barbara Surwilo, 148 June Circle, R.H., said she had two issues. She thanked the RHFD for the wonderful speeches. She completely endorses the RHFD's budget as it was submitted. She said if she was sitting at the Council table that the RHFD would have her as a definite champion for the budget as it is. As a previous Mayor and as a ten term Council member, she sees how lucky the citizens of this Town are when she looks at the RHFD. She told them that the minor part of this is that they are \$5,500,000 lucky but in her view, the better part is that they haven't suffered serious injuries and this is because of their training programs, as well as because of their equipment. She said that they are the professionals and they tell the Town what they need. She mentioned that they should be members of the Connecticut Fire Chiefs Association because it will help Rocky Hill if they talk to other Towns. She told the Town Council that the members of the RHFD are volunteers and they are exactly like them but they spend a lot more time than the Councilors do because these RHFD members need to be certified and they need to be physically fit. The RHFD members are doing things that are incredibly dangerous when they go out on calls. She said that it must be heartwrenching for the families because they never know when there is going to be an accident. She told the Town Council that if the RHFD wants training for them to give it to them and she told them to "keep your eye on the ball" if they want the little

things they are asking for. She told them that it is \$5,500,000 that they don't have to spend every single year for a professional fire department. In these economic times, she said this is a big deal. She said they all have the members of the RHFD on a pedestal and this is because they belong there. Her view is that the RHFD, which is over seventy-five years old, belongs on a pedestal. She asked the Town Council to please restore the RHFD's budget to the way it had been submitted. She said this was one of her issues.

Barbara Surwilo said her second issue is that it is very important for the Town to retain ownership of the Foundry Park and this is for a number of reasons. She said she had been a member of the SCORP Board in 1987 and she mentioned that there had been large returns with regards to the surveys. Eighty-five to eighty-seven percent of the people of the State of Connecticut had put down on the survey that their Number One priority was access to water, primarily fresh water. The Connecticut River frontage had ranked very high because a lot of that is privately owned. She said that the Town has an outstanding ability to gain ownership of that park in perpetuity. She told the Town Council that they should be saying in their heads that they aren't going to be sitting at the Council table forever and she would like to think for generations down that they will be grateful to the Town for retaining ownership of that park. The process of them getting to this point has been historical and long. She said it has also been hysterical. She is thankful that they have a developer who lives in this Town, who is patient and who has been trying to work this through. She asked the Town Council when they get to this item with regards to the retention of Town ownership for them to please make sure that they will retain this and for them not to have an Association own it. If Rocky Hill owns this, she said that they will at least have control for all of the citizens here. She told them if they are talking about insurance that it is probably not an insurance because their insurance won't go up based on a park that is one and a quarter acres. She said insurance and liability really aren't issues and she then asked the Town Council if the issue is a fiscal one because this is fiscally a minimal amount of money on this huge budget. She pleaded with them again to retain ownership of this for the people of Rocky Hill and for their children and grandchildren, etc. She thanked the Town Council. Mayor Vasel said thank you.

Sandi Kelly, 25 Tollgate Road, R.H., said she had already written a letter and she told the Town Council that she believed it had been passed out to them. She told them that she knew they were on a time constraint and she told them that they have heard facts and figures. She has had people coming after her who are talking about insurance costs and liability. People have also been talking about the importance of open space and green space. Everyone knows that the Town had just voted in a \$10,000,000 bond for open space and they know that the residents had voted to save open space years ago. She referred to liability and she said there are parks in Rocky Hill that have playgrounds, as well as climbing equipment and pools, etc. This Town has three beautiful sets of acreage with hiking. She said those things are liability and the park they are talking about now would just be an acre where people would sit down so she doesn't see this being a part of that. She then said that beyond the figures and the facts that they want to honor Richard Tulisano. Nobody has talked about Richard Tulisano and why this park isn't being called Rocky Hill Park II. She said it is lip service if they want to honor Richard Tulisano and put his name on a park but they don't want to pay for this. She mentioned how the State of Connecticut had named a Courthouse after Richard Tulisano and she said that the Town can't name an acre for him, as well as take that liability on. She referred to what Barbara Surwilo had

said about how this would be for generations to come. Sandi Kelly said that they don't know what the owners of the condos are going to do. She mentioned how they could say for the Amphitheater that there will be no concerts on a Wednesday evening or no concerts after 10:00 p.m., etc. She told the Town Council to not give away this acre that has been given to the Town. She thanked them very much. Mayor Vasel said thank you.

Mayor Vasel asked if there was anyone else from the public who wished to speak at this time. Jeff Thomen, 8 Knoll Lane, R.H. told the Town Council that he had been in front of them a few weeks ago to speak in support of all-day kindergarten. He told them that they have heard this evening, as well as in the budget process, that no one wishes to be in their seats and he wanted to echo that thought too. He told the Town Council that each and every one of them deserves credit for making courageous decisions to support all-day kindergarten and to support education. He knows that this budget has a lot of needs and wants in it and there are some limited needs that are associated with the revaluation they had and how this affected their ability to address all of those wants and needs essentially. He told each and every one of the Councilors that they deserve credit for supporting the schools, the education and also all-day kindergarten. He thanked them very much for that. Mayor Vasel said thank you.

Mayor Vasel asked if there was anyone else from the public who wished to speak. There was no one else.

Mayor Vasel said he thought that Deputy Mayor Bell wanted to speak now and then they would move on from the "Public Comment" section of this meeting. Deputy Mayor Bell said she had a letter to read aloud and in full at this time and she told Jessica Dumas (Clerk of the Council) that she would give her a copy of this too. Deputy Mayor Bell read this aloud and in full. This was addressed to all of the members of the RHFD and it was from her.

Mayor Vasel started to mention appointments and resignations when Councilor MacDonald asked for a Point of Order. Councilor MacDonald said the Councilors also had a letter in their packets that is also from someone in the public. He said that this is similar to the letter from Deputy Mayor Bell that they had just heard about except for the fact that they had that letter ahead of time. Councilor MacDonald referred to the letter that they had in their packets and he said it had been asked that that be read at this evening's Town Council meeting. He asked if that letter had been read into the record. Mayor Vasel said he didn't know what letter was being spoken about and he said that he didn't receive one in his packet. Councilor MacDonald said all of the Councilors had received this. This was addressed to Councilor Kochanek and the first line of it stated that this person who wrote it would like to have it read during the Town Council meeting on Monday, May 19, 2014 (today). Councilor MacDonald said that Councilor Casasanta was shaking her head that she had this letter. Councilor Moriarty said this letter had been e-mailed to all of them. Councilor MacDonald thought that they should have the Staff read into the record a letter that a member of the public wrote if they allowed Deputy Mayor Bell to read aloud and in full a letter that she had written. Deputy Mayor Bell thought that the letter had been written to Councilor Kochanek and she thought that he was going to read this. Mayor Vasel said that he would read this aloud and he asked if this was the letter about Councilor Kochanek. Councilor MacDonald said this wasn't about Councilor Kochanek. Councilor Vargas said this was addressed to Councilor Kochanek. Deputy Mayor Bell said this letter was

addressed to Councilor Kochanek and she thought it had asked him to read this into the record. Councilor Kochanek asked Mayor Vasel to read this letter. Mayor Vasel said no problem. Councilor MacDonald said it was only fair that they had full disclosure. Town Manager Gilbert told the Town Council that this letter had been e-mailed to them last week. Mayor Vasel asked if this letter was in the Councilors' packets too. Town Manager Gilbert believes that this had gone out after Friday's packets had gone out. Councilor Casasanta said this letter wasn't in their packets and it had been sent to them via e-mail. Councilor Kochanek said the issue was that the Councilors didn't have the letter that was just written. Deputy Mayor Bell said that letters don't have to be submitted in advance. Mayor Vasel told the Councilors that they were going to go through him and that this was going to be done in an orderly fashion. He explained that he didn't have this letter but he said that was fine and he would read it right now. He read the letter aloud and in full. This letter was addressed to Councilor Kochanek and it was from Patrick Cone, Captain of Station # 3 of the RHFD.

Appointments/Resignations

Mayor Vasel asked Deputy Mayor Bell and Minority Leader Moriarty if they had any appointments or resignations. Deputy Mayor Bell and Minority Leader Moriarty had none at this time.

Approval of Minutes

- A. Council Meeting – April 30, 2014
- B. Budget Workshop – May 5, 2014
- C. Budget Workshop – May 6, 2014
- D. Budget Workshop- May 12, 2014

Mayor Vasel confirmed with Jessica Dumas that she had said that there had been a problem with one of the sets of Minutes. Jessica Dumas said these were the May 12, 2014 Minutes. Mayor Vasel said all of the other Minutes could be approved, except for the Minutes of May 12, 2014.

Deputy Mayor Bell made a motion to approve the Minutes of April 30, 2014, May 5, 2014 and May 6, 2014. The motion was seconded by Councilor Drapeau and adopted unanimously.

Before this motion was seconded and voted on, Councilor Szeps said there was one set of Minutes that he had to abstain from voting on and he told them that he would let them know in one second. Mayor Vasel asked Councilor Szeps if this was because he hadn't been present at that meeting. Councilor Szeps said that was right. Mayor Vasel told Councilor Szeps that the Minutes are the Minutes whether he was present or not.

At this point, the motion was seconded and then voted on.

Mayor Vasel asked the Councilors if they wanted to table the approval of Item D.

Councilor Vargas made a motion to table the Minutes of May 12, 2014. The motion was seconded by Councilor MacDonald and adopted unanimously.

Subcommittee Reports

A. Finance

Councilor Vargas said the Finance Committee had met on May 14, 2014. They approved the 2013/2014 Property Tax Suspense List and she said this item was included on this meeting's Consent Agenda.

The Finance Committee also renewed the Sexton's contract for Center Cemetery for three years. There will be no change to the current contract.

Councilor Vargas said that Finance Director Mehr entered into an \$8,100,000 BAN refunding on May 15, 2014 with Eastern Bank. This is at a rate of .1530%.

Mayor Vasel thanked Councilor Vargas.

B. Public Safety

Deputy Mayor Bell said the Public Safety Committee had met at 6:00 p.m. this evening prior to this Town Council meeting. They had updates from the RHPD, the RHFD and the RHVAA.

For the 60 West Street update, there had been two minor calls. One had been for a medical call for an ambulance and one was for a false alarm.

Deputy Mayor Bell said the RHFD had brought forward a concern that they had with IT with regards to computers and cell phones. Town Manager Gilbert will be meeting with the RHFD and the IT Staff tomorrow. This will be made a priority and Deputy Mayor Bell said that the Public Safety Committee will then be updated on that. Deputy Mayor Bell said that this will also go to the IT Committee.

C. Government Operations Committee

Deputy Mayor Bell said she had no report this evening for the Government Operations Committee.

D. Economic Development

Councilor Casasanta said that she had no report this evening for the Economic Development Subcommittee of the Town Council.

E. Land Acquisition & Farmland Preservation

Councilor Szeps said that the Open Space Land Acquisition & Farmland Preservation Subcommittee hadn't met this evening but he wanted to let the public know that they are still in negotiations and hopefully the final outcome will be a positive one. He told them to stay tuned.

Mayor Vasel said thank you.

F. Senior Affairs Committee

Councilor Vargas said the Senior Affairs Committee had met at 5:00 p.m. this evening. She said that she had brought two items to the attention of the people who had been present at that meeting. A letter was sent to State Representative Tony Guerrero with regards to the request for funding for site plans, a feasibility plan and for engineering concepts for the new Senior/Community Center. The sending of this letter had been voted on at the Town Council meeting on April 7, 2014. Councilor Vargas said that she would be following up with State Representative Guerrero no later than in June 2014 to see what the status of this is.

Councilor Vargas said there had been a pretty good discussion at the Senior Affairs Committee meeting and they began working on developing a survey that will be made available to all of the Rocky Hill residents, who are fifty-five years old and older. This survey is for them to identify or to determine the facilities, services and programs that are needed to meet the increasing senior population in this Town. This would include any additional type of tax relief programs, which may or may not be needed by the seniors.

Councilor Vargas said thank you and Mayor Vasel thanked her.

G. Executive Search Committee

Councilor Casasanta said the Executive Search Committee will be closing applications on May 23, 2014. They are expecting to move expeditiously thereafter with interviews, etc. They are looking to seeing a great movement in this effort within the next few weeks.

Councilor Casasanta said thank you. Mayor Vasel said thank you.

H. IT Committee

Councilor Drapeau said the IT Committee had met on May 6, 2014. They laid out meeting dates and times for the remainder of this year. They also had briefly discussed the IT Study and its contents and they came to the conclusion quickly that they need to prioritize IT needs that are critical. They agreed that backup systems are their Number One priority after they had extensive discussions with John Nowakowski, who is the IT representative for the Town, so they will begin to focus their efforts in this area. The other projects are to include hardware and software upgrades as are needed. This will include switches and other backbone items of which the IT Committee will continue to stay informed on. The IT Committee then moved onto desktop upgrades and an inventory has been asked for of all of the desktops (age and type, etc.). He said they then had moved onto cell phones. There are fifty-six cell phones that are being managed by the RHPD. Thirty-eight of these are for the RHPD, eighteen are for the Town, and there are an additional eight to eleven cell phones that are being managed by the RHFD separately. There are separate bills for each department and none of these are being facilitated, or managed, by IT currently.

Mayor Vassel said thank you.

Consent Agenda

Deputy Mayor Bell moved to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Councilor Casasanta and adopted unanimously.

A. Approval – Working Notes – May 5, 2014

B. Approval – FY 2013-14 Property Tax Suspense List

BE IT RESOLVED THAT taxes on the entire Grand List, in the amounts below be and are hereby transferred to Suspense:

		<u># of Accounts</u>	<u>Amount</u>
2010	Personal Property	37	\$ 39,397.29
2010	Motor Vehicle and Supplemental Motor Vehicle	335	\$ 43,324.01
		<hr/>	<hr/>
	Totals	372	\$ 84,770.65
		=====	=====

REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION

The attached list of taxes is recommended for reclassification to the Suspense List, and represents the balances of such Grand List years as of May 19, 2014. This is transferring the entirety of these years and their accounts to suspense in no way limits the Town's rights of enforcement of collection.

Old Business

A. Discussion & Possible Action – Park at Foundry

Councilor Moriarty made a motion to take ownership of the Park at the Foundry. The motion was seconded by Councilor MacDonald.

A roll call vote was called for the original motion to take ownership of the Park at the Foundry and was adopted 6-2-1:

Kochanek- Yes
MacDonald- Yes
Moriarty- Yes
Drapeau- No

Bell-Yes
Vasel-Abstain
Vargas-Yes
Szeps-No
Casasanta-Yes

Before this motion was voted on, Mayor Vasel asked if there was any discussion from the Town Council. Councilor Moriarty said this is long overdue and he thought that the public had spoken. There was a nice article in today's newspaper with regards to what is being done on the Glastonbury side and he said that he wished that Rocky Hill could do something like that but they just don't have the land like Glastonbury has along the Connecticut River. Councilor Moriarty said this will just add to the neighborhood there in Rocky Hill and he thinks a lot of things will follow that. He mentioned that there are other properties around there that he thinks they will see coming along after that that will enhance that area. That section of Town is their oldest one and there is a lot of history there. He referred to their referendum from a couple of years ago with regards to the \$10,000,000 for open space and land. He then referred to what Sandi Kelly had said about Dividend Ponds and he said that this just goes to show that this is what the Rocky Hill residents want. Councilor Moriarty said that Councilor Drapeau had wanted the amount that the insurance would cost for this and he thought they all saw that this was minimal. This would be a little over \$200. Councilor Moriarty said the revenue coming off of this park, when all is said and done, will be a huge addition to the tax roll. He personally likes the design of the complex as a whole. He thinks that it will work very well there and it will fit the neighborhood. He hopes that all of them (condos) will all be sold before a shovel is put in the ground so that they can get this done in one shot. He thinks that the developer has "stepped up to the plate". Some of the remediation was going to be done in phases and now the developer wants to have this done in one shot. He said they saw an e-mail with regards to the readings for the asbestos on the towers and how that was good so this will move things along, as well as make things a lot easier. The developer will also hopefully save some money on this. He thinks that the last thing for this will be the State Traffic Control, which is out of the Town's control and timeframe.

Councilor Drapeau said he thought that all of them wanted to say yes to this. They got some preliminary insurance information and those numbers, at the very minimum, seemed reasonable. He said that the only caveat he has is that the Town has an Insurance Committee and this hasn't been vetted through them yet. He said this is what the Insurance Committee is there for. He mentioned that his only suggestion for this would be for them to weigh in on this and he thinks this will then be a "green light" all the way through once they have their endorsement. He told them as Councilors that they need to be prudent about this.

Councilor MacDonald said that he supports this and he didn't think that anyone wouldn't support a park. He said they are talking about \$218 and he said that they should get many people involved by all means if this was hundreds of thousands of dollars. He said though that that still wouldn't change his vision and how he would vote for this. He told Councilor Drapeau that he would cut a check now for \$218 and he would pay for this. Councilor MacDonald was sure that half of the people in the audience would do this too. He sees zero benefit for delaying this motion, which is important, so that they could go in front of the Insurance Committee.

Mayor Vasel asked if any other Councilors wished to speak. Councilor Drapeau told Councilor MacDonald that this was on his head then. Councilor MacDonald told Councilor Drapeau that he would give a check right now if he wanted him to. Councilor Casasanta asked for a Point of Order. Councilor Kochanek asked Councilor Drapeau if he said that he was okay now with this because then he wouldn't have to speak. Councilor Drapeau said that his opinion stood. He said this is what the Insurance Committee is there for. He wants to say yes to this but he wants to make sure that their regulatory body weighs in on this first. This is the only caveat he has.

Councilor Moriarty made a motion to move the question. The motion was seconded by Councilor MacDonald and adopted by a roll call vote 6-2-1:

Kochanek- Yes
MacDonald- Yes
Moriarty- Yes
Drapeau- No
Bell- Yes
Vasel- Abstain
Vargas- Yes
Szeps- No
Casasanta- Yes

Before this motion was seconded and voted on, Councilor Moriarty mentioned Robert's Rules and he said that first they had to vote on this first before they voted on the motion that was on the table already. Mayor Vasel told Councilor Moriarty he was absolutely right.

Mayor Vasel asked if there was a second. This motion was seconded at this time.

Councilor Vargas asked what they were voting on. Councilor Moriarty explained. Councilor Casasanta asked if Jessica Dumas could please take a roll call vote in a case like this. Jessica Dumas did a roll call vote at this time.

At this point, the original motion was voted on. A roll call vote was taken again for that.

New Business

A. Discussion & Possible Action – National Alzheimer's Awareness Month – Purple Lights

Mayor Vasel said he had asked for this item to be placed on the agenda this evening. He had met with a representative of the Alzheimer's Association, which is located in Rocky Hill. The representative asked that purple cellophane be placed around their lights on June 21, 2014 like they had done for Autism Awareness Month. He said that he spoke to Town Manager Gilbert and she spoke to Lisa Zerio (Director of Parks and Recreation & Custodial Staff). Mayor Vasel said the cost for this will be approximately \$150 and he told the Town Council that he wanted to run this by them.

Mayor Vasel asked if there was a motion to approve this.

Councilor Moriarty made a motion to put purple cellophane wrap on the lights outside of Town Hall to recognize Alzheimer's Awareness Month in June. The motion was seconded by Councilor MacDonald and adopted unanimously.

Mayor Vasel said thank you and he told the Town Council that he appreciated this.

B. Discussion & Possible Action – Filling Vacant IT Position

Councilor Drapeau said he would be making a motion to open the search for the IT Director but he doesn't want to have this opened until June 24, 2014. He wants to have the new Town Manager weighing in on this. He thinks that they need to get applicants for this soon but he thinks there is a little bit of a delay between when the new Town Manager gets here and when the old Town Manager retires. He doesn't want to have this process slowed down though any more than they have to.

Councilor Drapeau made a motion to open the search for the position of IT Director beginning on June 24, 2014. The motion was seconded by Councilor Szeps and adopted unanimously.

Before this motion was voted on, Mayor Vasel asked Councilor Drapeau if he had any more comments and he said that he didn't. Councilor Moriarty told Councilor Drapeau that he agreed with what he wanted to do with regards to holding off. Councilor Moriarty asked if there was a job description for this. Councilor Drapeau said they did have one. Deputy Mayor Bell said this was in their packets. Councilor Drapeau told Councilor Moriarty that he would give him a copy of this if he wanted.

Mayor Vasel asked if there was any other discussion and there was none.

At this point, the motion was voted on.

C. Adoption & Set Mill Rate – 2014/2015 Budget

Mayor Vasel turned to Deputy Mayor Bell and he told her that she had a motion to make.

Deputy Mayor Bell made a motion to move that on 6/30/2014 move unexpended funds in the Fire Department Training account (#5334) as well as unexpended funds in the Storm Standby account (#5121) and move to a non-reoccurring account and earmark these funds for Fire Department training and storm standby should they be needed. Furthermore, that as of 4/30/2014 \$11,814 remains in #5121 Storm Standby and after approximately \$7,500 in stipends are paid to the current 5 recruits who are in training approximately, approximately \$13,000 will remain in the training account. This total of more than \$24,000 will more than offset the \$20,000 reductions from these two line items, if further expenditures are required and deemed necessary. The motion was seconded by Councilor Drapeau and adopted. Yay-5; (Bell, Casasanta, Drapeau, Szeps and Vargas). Nay-3; (Kochanek, MacDonald and Moriarty). Abstain-1; (Vasel)

Before this motion was voted on, Deputy Mayor Bell said that she wanted to make sure with these additional funds that these don't get swept into another account to pay for some of the overages they have elsewhere but that these are actually earmarked so that the RHFD gets their training funds and their storm standby funds.

Councilor MacDonald asked Deputy Mayor Bell with this entry that she was doing, what the remaining cut will be to the RHFD's budget based on Town Manager Gilbert's recommended budget. Deputy Mayor Bell said that she didn't include this in her motion so she didn't tally that.

Councilor MacDonald made a friendly amendment to have the amount be added back to the Fire Departments Budget, therefore fully funding the Fire Department as presented in the Town Manager's Proposed budget.

Deputy Mayor Bell said according to all of the Munis reports right now that there are a number of accounts that have unexpended funds. She therefore feels that she would like to stick to the two key accounts and she explained some more. She said that she wouldn't accept the friendly amendment by Councilor MacDonald.

Councilor Kochanek said he would like to voice his opinion. He referred to the storm standby account and he told Deputy Mayor Bell that he thought she had some credence with that but he said who knows how big a storm will be and how many there will be, etc. He said if the arbitrary figure was \$24,000 then half of that was expended but he said that this doesn't mean that there couldn't have been more storms. Deputy Mayor Bell said she agreed. Councilor Kochanek referred to the \$10,000 that is left over and he said that won't go back to the RHFD but this will go to help to pay for the other accounts in the general picture that are over. Deputy Mayor Bell started to talk about her motion and Councilor Kochanek said he knew her motion. Councilor Kochanek said that he was talking about reality. The RHFD puts an "X" amount of dollars in its budget every year. This is based on the best known number of how many people they will have coming in and the best known amount of how many pieces of hose are going to have to be bought, etc. He said that they are right on sometimes and sometimes they are lucky that they don't have to spend all of the money. Sometimes they go over. He explained that this is a best known number. He mentioned about it being arbitrarily said that the training number, etc. was wrong last year. The money won't stay in the RHFD budget but it will go back to the Town's General Fund eventually to pay the other deficits. He said that this has been done for years. The RHFD doesn't spend at the end of the fiscal year just to zero their budget lines out like a lot of other people do and he said that isn't necessarily in Rocky Hill. He explained how some businesses run their business so that they are almost on top of their number at the end of the budget year. The RHFD has never done that and he believes that they don't do that now. The RHFD anticipates what it needs and it uses what it has to. The RHFD then turns money back to the Town. He gave an example of one or two observations to be made about there being \$5,000 left so it is going to be taken away from them because they don't really need it. This doesn't take into consideration that the RHFD would need this. He doesn't think that this money should be tagged and put into a nonrecurring fund. He told them to put this where it is supposed to be and he said this is why they have budget line items.

Deputy Mayor Bell said she was just trying to true up these accounts. She wasn't suggesting that the RHFD would spend funds that they didn't need, etc. She thinks that they need to do a historical look back to see what is really and absolutely needed in those accounts. She mentioned that she will be the first one to say that they go to contingency if the \$41,000 that gets allocated to training isn't enough. She said that training and storm standby aren't optional things. She said though that they can't carry a number that they might use in a budget. There are many needs within the Town if the money doesn't need to be used for the RHFD. She mentioned some of the needs. She then said that this would give the Town Council the flexibility to have the money used for something different if the money is not needed for training or for storm standby. She said that she didn't want to insinuate in any way that the RHFD's budget isn't accurate.

Councilor Kochanek told Deputy Mayor Bell where they were really at is the fact that she is picking a number based on what she feels as opposed to what the Department Head feels. Councilor Kochanek said the bottom line is that the money all goes back to the Town's General Fund. He told Deputy Mayor Bell that she was trying to take two items and put them in a nondiscretionary fund. Councilor Vargas said this isn't nondiscretionary. She told Councilor Kochanek that the money will be in the nonrecurring account and it will be earmarked for storm standby and for training. Councilor Kochanek asked why they don't just put the money there to begin with. Councilor Vargas said if this budget is looked at on June 30, 2014 that it is going to show that the full amount was spent on storm standby, etc. She explained that this money will be moved into an offline account so there will be money there when Chief Garrahy needs it. Councilor Vargas said this is just a semantics thing. Councilor Kochanek said he understood. He said right now though when money is not expended that Finance Director Mehr and Town Manager Gilbert will move it out of there in order to pay for something else. Councilor Vargas said when money is in nonrecurring that it will stay there until it is used. Councilor Kochanek said that is correct. Mayor Vasel said this motion won't allow Finance Director Mehr to use the money for something else. Councilor Vargas started to explain more.

Councilor Casasanta made a motion to move the question. The motion was seconded by Councilor Drapeau and adopted. Yay-5; (Bell, Casasanta, Drapeau, Szeps and Vargas). Nay-3; (Kochanek, MacDonald and Moriarty). Abstain-1; (Vasel).

The original motion was then voted on.

Councilor Vargas made a motion to add \$40,000 to Account #01900300 5808 (Contingency) for next year's budget. The motion was seconded by Councilor Drapeau and adopted with Councilor MacDonald and Councilor Kochanek voting Nay.

Before this motion was voted on, Councilor Vargas said this is the amount that the Finance Committee had spoken about. There is a residual of rounding when the mill rate is being computed. This is the dollar amount that doesn't affect the mill rate and she said by adding this amount to contingency that the mill rate won't be affected. She said the reason that she is suggesting this amount be added to contingency is because there had been much discussion during the budget process as to how underfunded they are for retirement payouts and/or for any other department that is underfunded during the year. She mentioned as opposed to them giving

the money to one particular department that she thinks it will be in the best interests of everybody to have this put into contingency to be used at a later date.

Councilor MacDonald told Councilor Vargas that he was curious as to why she hadn't selected to have this put towards the Plan of Conservation and Development. Councilor MacDonald said it is required for them to have a Plan of Conservation and Development by July 15th. Mayor Vassel said this is by July 1, 2015. Councilor MacDonald said from having discussions with Town Manager Gilbert that the Town will be at a high risk of losing discretionary funding from the State if they don't have a plan. This will be in excess of \$2,000,000 or \$3,000,000. There is a huge amount at risk so he is curious as to why this isn't a higher priority instead of them trying to fund future payouts. Councilor Vargas said it isn't that that isn't a higher priority. She said they got a lot of information in their packets and one piece of information was a fee proposal from Planimetrics. This is for \$50,000 for the Plan of Conservation and Development to be done. She explained that money can be taken out of contingency to fund this if more will be needed so this is why she chose to have the money put in contingency.

Mayor Vassel asked if any other Councilors had any questions. No Councilors had any.

Councilor Vargas moved the following resolution reading it aloud and in full. The motion was seconded by Deputy Mayor Bell and adopted. Yay-6; (Bell, Casasanta, Drapeau, Szeps, Vassel and Vargas) Nay-3; (Kochanek, MacDonald and Moriarty).

"Adoption of the 2014 - 2015 Annual Budget"

BE IT RESOLVED THAT for the fiscal year 2014-2015 General Fund Budget dated May 19, 2014, as itemized by department, board, committee, commission or other purpose and providing for total expenditures in the amount of \$68,573,609 with \$35,320,903 for the Board of Education, \$2,058,526 for Debt Retirement and \$31,194,180 for other departments, boards, committees, commissions, and other purposes of the Town of Rocky Hill, be and hereby is adopted, pursuant to Section 806 of the Town Charter.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT for the fiscal year 2014-2015 tax levy of the Town of Rocky Hill shall be established in the amount of \$58,289,002 and the tax rate upon the grand list of October 1, 2013 shall be \$29.7 per \$1,000 of taxable value.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT tax bills in the following amounts shall be due in one (1) installment on July 1, 2014.

Real Estate Tax Bills of \$300 or less

All Motor Vehicle Tax Bills

Personal Property Tax Bills of \$500 or less

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT all other tax bills shall be due in two (2) equal installments, payable without interest and/or penalty on July 1, 2014 and January 1, 2015.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT all motor vehicle and personal property tax bills in the amount of \$2.00 and under are hereby waived.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Town Manager is hereby authorized to secure bids for items approved in the budget subject to the provisions of the Charter.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Capital Improvement Program 2014-2015 through 2018-2019 be and hereby is adopted pursuant to Section 802 and 806 of the Town Charter.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Capital Improvement Program 2014-2015 through 2018-2019 is a forecast of capital expenditures and may be modified to meet changes in priorities that occur within the community over time.

Before this motion was voted on, Mayor Vasel asked if there was any discussion. Councilor Vargas said she had some comments that she wanted to read. She thanked Town Manager Gilbert, Finance Director Mehr, Treasurer Mona McKim, the Department Heads and all of the Town employees for all of their time, hard work and energy in putting this year's budget together. Councilor Vargas also thanked the Department Heads for continuing with the departmental reviews prior to the budget workshops and she is continuing to find these being very helpful. The Town Council had been presented with a budget from Town Manager Gilbert this year that reflected a 7% increase in the spending over last year. This translated into a 4.4 mill increase to the taxpayer. She told the Councilors that it is their responsibility to make sure that everyone is provided a Town that is safe and healthy to live in and that necessary funds are provided for a good education. It is their responsibility too to make sure that this is done in a fiscally responsible manner. This involved reducing Town Manager Gilbert's budget this year that had been presented to the Town Council. The reductions that were made to this budget had been done after the departmental reviews were listened to and after questions had been asked at the budget workshops. These reductions also had been done after they had analyzed the financial information that had been provided to them. The residents of Rocky Hill were first and foremost in their minds. For the first time in Rocky Hill, this budget includes all-day kindergarten. This is something that their school system has been lacking for some time. This budget also reflects the addition of two SROs, who will work along with the 1.5 existing Youth Officers in order to keep the children safe while they are in school. This budget also reflects numerous security upgrades at their schools.

Councilor Vargas said when Town Manager Gilbert had presented her budget that there had been a slide which showed the cost to the average home. This showed an increase of \$74 per year. With the budget being approved this evening, the average home will now be saving \$150 with no change to the services that are currently being provided. This is a swing of \$250 per an average home. Councilor Vargas said that she knows that the Town Staff and the volunteers do a great job of providing excellent service to the Rocky Hill residents and they will continue doing so with this budget. She said it is for these reasons that she will be supporting this budget as it is presented.

Mayor Vasel asked Councilor Kochanek if he had any comments and he said no.

Mayor Vasel asked Councilor MacDonald if he had any comments. Councilor MacDonald said that since Day One when he had been the Chairman of the Board of Education through today with him being a member of the Town Council that he has always fought for and supported all-day kindergarten. That will be happening this year. He then referred to what a good friend of him had phrased once with regards to “better, bolder, brighter and safer schools”. He mentioned how the Rocky Hill High School referendum, as well as two other referendums, had been all done with Democrats, Republicans and Independents working together. He said that he was seeing many of them in the audience today.

Councilor MacDonald referred to last week’s budget session. He said that the citizens of this Town who depend on their Elected Officials for honest and fair representation had been treated to a display of the worst kind of government. He explained that the Councilors will never agree on everything but he said that the condescending actions, the unprofessional attitude and the lack of respect were appalling to him. He has been volunteering in Rocky Hill since former Mayor Unwin had put him on the Planning and Zoning Commission before 2000. Councilor MacDonald said that he has never been treated with such disrespect as he had been last week. He said the Majority had read a preprinted response and they never answered his question when he had asked several times as to whether Chief Garrahy had been asked about a particular cut. Councilor MacDonald said in effect that the Majority was saying that they didn’t care what Chief Garrahy thinks and that they know better. Councilor MacDonald said they shouldn’t be operating that way. He said when the Majority was asked about what it was exactly that was proposing to be cut in certain accounts that their answer was they didn’t know and they didn’t know what was in the accounts. He then referred to the proposed huge cut to the Cora J. Belden Library, which is one of Rocky Hill’s institutions that is most used by the citizens and the valuable Rocky Hill seniors, and how this included cutting half of the part time employees, as well as half of the books. He said that this was an example all in all of how government shouldn’t work. He then referred to when the Majority had cut all of the Police vehicles and the radios for the First Responders, as well as the funding for the Honor Guard uniforms that the RHFD wear at funeral, etc. and he said this speaks volumes to their actions. He then referred to the Board of Education Administration and the RHPD and how a ton of money had been spent on an outside consultant to tell the Town what should be done for the safety of the children in school. All in all they were told to have four SROs. One SRO would be in each of the schools. He said the Majority knows better so they put two SROs in the budget. He said as a result that he wouldn’t be supporting this budget because he truly believes that it unnecessarily increases the safety risk for each and every business, as well as citizen, in Rocky Hill. Mayor Vasel said thank you.

Mayor Vasel turned to Councilor Moriarty. Councilor Moriarty apologized to the public for him not being present at last week’s Town Council budget workshop. He said that he had to work. He had asked if the meeting could be moved because they had tried to appease every person who has been elected in the past but he said that isn’t happening this year. He guesses that the politics in Rocky Hill have changed. He also called Mayor Vasel a liar because he said that he had sat in his office one day with him and he had promised him that he wouldn’t go after someone’s job but he did.

Deputy Mayor Bell asked for a Point of Order. She said that Robert's Rules states that the "speaker must be courteous and never attack other members or question the motive of the members". She asked Mayor Vasel to please rule on that. Mayor Vasel told Councilor Moriarty that he was out of order with his comment and he asked him to please try to keep his comments a little more positive. Councilor Moriarty apologized.

Councilor Moriarty referred to what Rich Pawlich-Pagliccio, who is a former Councilor and former Deputy Chief of the RHFD, had stated. Councilor Moriarty said that only two people on the Town Council know what the firefighters go through. He referred to the horrendous crash that had happened on West Street, where three people had been burned alive in their cars. He said the firefighters have to look at these things. He gave some more examples of fire calls from over the years. He said he was working at Hicks Garage the day that the person had jumped off of the bridge. He was working with Al Gilbert, who had come back from that fire call, and he stared at a wall for three hours after that. Councilor Moriarty said the cutting of training for the volunteers is like taking the gun away from a soldier. He told the Town Council that they aren't Micromanagers who take money and move it around. He said this isn't only for the RHFD but it is also for the RHVAA and the RHPD because they have to see these things day in and day out. He told the Town Council that they want to take cruisers and radios from them. He mentioned the night that the RHFD had done its presentation in front of the Town Council and he told them how everyone was "raving" about how great their insurance rate is and how much money is going to be saved. He told the Town Council that now they are going to start taking money away from the RHFD. He said that Charlie Wisnioski might be right about how the homeowners' insurances might be going up. He said that this budget is going to move the Town back ten years. He told them good luck if they think that they are going to get a Plan of Conservation and Development for \$50,000 and do something with it. He told them that they just had heard what Christa Mariner had said about this costing \$100,000 for the Town of Berlin to do and he told them to remember that they get what they pay for. He explained that it isn't easy for any of the Councilors to sit at the Council table because they all pay taxes too. By them hitting the Cora J. Belden Library's budget, it will affect every senior and every child, etc. in Rocky Hill. He then mentioned how the State of Connecticut is pushing recycling so Rocky Hill got a Recycling Coordinator and how the Town started getting revenue from that for the first time in years. He said that he is almost glad that he wasn't present at last week's Town Council budget workshop because he doesn't think that he would be as calm as he was this evening. He said that he would not be supporting this budget.

Mayor Vasel asked Councilor Drapeau if he had any comments. Councilor Drapeau thought they had said enough.

Mayor Vasel asked Councilor Casasanta if she had any comments and she said that she was good.

Mayor Vasel asked Councilor Szeps if he had any comments. Councilor Szeps had none.

Mayor Vasel asked Councilor Vargas if she had any comments. Councilor Vargas said she had already spoken.

Mayor Vasel asked Deputy Mayor Bell if she had any comments. Deputy Mayor Bell said they were faced with the “daunting task” this year of reducing the inexplicably proposed budget increase of 7%. Their job as Town Councilors is to bring forward a budget that balances affordability with the needs of the Town and their job is also to exercise their fiduciary responsibility. Many of the infrastructure needs that are critical have been addressed. These include increased security for the school buildings, ADA bathrooms and sprinklers in the elementary schools. The all-day kindergarten program, which is much needed, has been funded and this will finally bring their school system to a level that is shared by most of their neighboring Towns. This will be within their DRG and within the State. The school security has been exponentially enhanced by the funding of intercom systems, security cameras and key fob entry systems. Two SROs have been added to the 1.5 Youth Officers that they currently have so there is a total of 3.5 Officers, who are responsible for enhancing the security of their children. She referred to the motion that had been made this evening in reference to the funding for the RHFD. That ensures that adequate funding will be in place for training and for storm standby. She referred to the comments made by one of the Councilors about how the proposed reduction is stupid and how the Councilor had said that he hopes they can sleep at night. She said these comments were “flammatory”, totally unnecessary and “just downright disrespectful”. Most of the department’s budgets have been cut because the Town Council is striving to operate this Town in a more cost effective manner by basing their funding on needs instead of wants. The budget now is slightly more than a 3% increase. She said that she can sleep at night knowing that the Town Council has done their best for the Rocky Hill taxpayers and she thinks that they will also sleep better at night. She said that she will be supporting the budget for all of these reasons.

At this point, the motion was voted on.

D. Update – Plan of Conservation and Development

Mayor Vasel turned to Town Manager Gilbert and he told her that he knew she had been working on this all week. Town Manager Gilbert told the Councilors that they had received a number of documents from her in their packets that had been sent out on Friday when the agenda had been amended. She explained what had been amended during the 2013 legislative session to move the date to July 1, 2015 for this. She said that there will be a very lengthy process that they have to go through with regards to the Plan of Conservation and Development. There are certain timeframes that they must have from when this plan is published. There are sixty-five days for a public comment period. She and the Town Planner have been working to obtain a quote for someone to assist the Planning and Zoning Commission with the update for the Plan of Conservation and Development. This will be within the parameter of the dollars that they have. The Chairman of the Planning and Zoning Commission wants some changes done to one of the quotes that they have received and they are hoping to get these added into the quote without the cost going up.

Mayor Vasel thanked Town Manager Gilbert.

Mayor's Report

A. Proclamation Recognizing National Public Works Week

Mayor Vasel read the Proclamation aloud and in full.

Mayor Vasel reminded everyone about the Memorial Day Parade. This will be held on May 27, 2014 and he believed that it would step off at 9:30 a.m. from Rocky Hill High School. Town Manager Gilbert said they didn't know yet because they hadn't received an itinerary from the Rocky Hill Chamber of Commerce. Mayor Vasel said that the Rocky Hill Chamber of Commerce was working on this and fine-tuning everything.

Mayor Vasel said that he wanted to comment on the budget. He told them that he was sitting before them this evening as their elected Mayor with his fellow Councilors. He said the Rocky Hill voters had elected them as the agents of change and as the new direction, as well as the new wave. He mentioned that he was humbled this evening by the enormous task that has become their budget. Rocky Hill had been known for its enviable tax rate for nearly a decade but he questioned at what cost. He mentioned the referendums that they had seen for updating Rocky Hill High School for fear of losing its accreditation, for the preservation of open space that other Towns have valued much higher than their own, and for the paving of roadways that have fallen into a state of disrepair. This is all due to the vision of where and how to spend the taxpayers' dollars. He said that the Town Council has a different vision. This is a way to expend the taxpayers' dollars on priority projects while they are still maintaining a mill rate that is reasonable. Their budget was difficult this year and this was due mainly to the fact that so much was needed but their tax base decreased sharply with the revaluation. The revaluation, which was recent, decimated the tax base so that even a zero increase budget would net a change in the mill rate of 2.3 mills. He said for them to add to this the task of making improvements to their infrastructure under incredible odds and also keeping the contractual obligations paid. The mill rate will increase by 3.1 mills but he told everyone to please understand that the actual increase is only .8 mills when they take into consideration the revaluation that any Mayor and any Town Council wouldn't have escaped. They have made significant cuts to the budget but they vowed to decipher the wants from the needs, which they attempted to do in a reasonable fashion. They are proud to be bringing all-day kindergarten to Rocky Hill and this will be commencing this September. Multiple security upgrades will be in each and every school building in their district. This will also include the addition of two SROs and a reallocation of 1.5 Youth Officers for a total of 3.5 Officers, who will be dedicated to the security and the safety of the Rocky Hill children. He mentioned that there is no better gift that they can give to their children than security, safety and education. They must realize that the future of Rocky Hill is these children. They represent the future Mayor, Councilors and members of the Board of Education. Mayor Vasel said he and the Councilors have not forgotten about the extreme need for a proper Capital Improvement Plan to be implemented in order to proactively handle the needs of Rocky Hill going forward. He said that he will be announcing the creation of a bipartisan Capital Improvement Plan Committee, which will be established to effectively determine the priorities of Rocky Hill for Capital expenditures. His hope is that Rocky Hill will remain a desirable and prosperous Town to live in, to have their children raised in and for them to serve their community. He said that the Town Council is standing unified as a team and they are hoping to

retain their (residents) faith and trust for the best to be done for Rocky Hill. He thanked everyone.

Town Manager's Report

No Town Manager's Report was given at this time.

Adjournment

Councilor Vargas moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Councilor Szeps and adopted unanimously.

As there was no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 8:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica M. Dumas
Clerk of the Council